(Amount Rs. in crore)

As on March	Scheduled commercial banks (including foreign banks)	Public sector Banks	Domestic Private sector banks
1999	7,41,660	6,07,348 (81.9%)	86,579 (11.7%)
2007	26,06,150	19,11,993 (73.4%)	5,43,361 (20.8%)

*Figures in bracket indicate %age share to total deposits of SCBs.

The public sector banks were operating 49,470 branches in June, 2007 as against 45,381 in June, 1999. The deposits of public sector banks have increased by around 215% during this period. The banks devise their own strategies to expand their business and branch network.

Public and external debts

4233. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of public and external debt as on date;

(b) whether it is a fact that both public and external debts on Government are increasing;

(c) if so, the reasons for the increase and its effects on Indian economy and fiscal deficit; and

(d) what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) The public debt of Government of India, including internal and external debt, at the end of 2007-2008 (RE) was as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

Internal debt	1844110
External debt (book value)	112686
TOTAL:	1956796

(b) While internal and external debt of Central Government have been increasing in absolute terms, as percentage of GDP, it has gone down from 43.1% in 2003-04 to 41.7% in 2007-08 (RE).

(c) Central Government has been taking recourse to internal and external borrowings to finance the fiscal deficit. The marginal rise in external debt as percentage of GDP from 1.7% in 2003-04 to 2.4% in 2007-08 (RE) is largely due to increase in multilateral debt. However, reflecting the process of fiscal consolidation, internal debt as percentage of GDP has shown a decline from 41.4% in 2003-04 to 39.3% in 2007-08 (RE).

(d) The Central Government has been following a comprehensive strategy to moderate

growth in public debt through a policy of fiscal rectitude, recourse to sources of lower cost borrowings, debt restructuring measures, pursuing appropriate tax policies that result in higher tax: GDP ratio, in order to facilitate the process of fiscal consolidation.

Proposal to raise home loan ceiling

4234. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government proposes to raise the home loan ceiling;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has also lately felt that the present ceiling is not enough; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (d) The Government does not prescribe any ceiling on home loans. However, according to the RBI guidelines, there is a limit on loans for housing at Rs. 20 lakh for priority sector lending. Furthermore, the Government of India had formulated a scheme known as the Differential Rate of Interest (DRI) Scheme in March 1972 for extending financial assistance at concessional rate of interest at 4 per cent to selected low income groups .

At the behest of the Government the limit of housing loan under the DRI Scheme was raised from Rs. 5000/- to Rs. 20,000/- per beneficiary *w.e.f.* June 13, 2007 by the RBI.

Proposal for new Taxes

4235. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to introduce new taxes in Budget 2008-09 which will burden aam admi especially the salaried class;

(b) whether Government will keep in mind the prices of essential items have almost doubled before introducing new taxes; and

(c) if so, how Government proposes to react to the above situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) The Union Budget 2008-09, has rationalized the personal income-tax rate structure to provide substantial relief to the aam admi, especially the salaried class. The tax relief so provided will, to a large extent, provide protection against rising prices to such tax-payers. Further, there is no proposal to introduce any new taxes which will burden such persons.

Investor-Friendly Environment

4236. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has blamed the State Governments for not providing an investor-friendly environment to private companies like ITC and Bharati Enterprises;

(b) whether India has framed a clear roadmap to boost private investment and strengthen rural areas but some State Governments have not been very supportive in providing investor-